

ABSTRACT

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A pharmaceutical dosage unit for oral administration to a human female comprising a therapeutically effective amount of 17β -estradiol-3-lower alkanoate, 5 most preferably 17β -estradiol-3-acetate, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier is disclosed. Also disclosed is a method for treating a human female in need of 17β -estradiol and a contraceptive method by oral administration of the pharmaceutical dosage unit and a method of preparing a pharmaceutical composition that may be used to form the pharmaceutical dosage unit of the 10 invention.